

ASHBEE - QUIXOTE AND BRITISH ART - LONDON, 1900





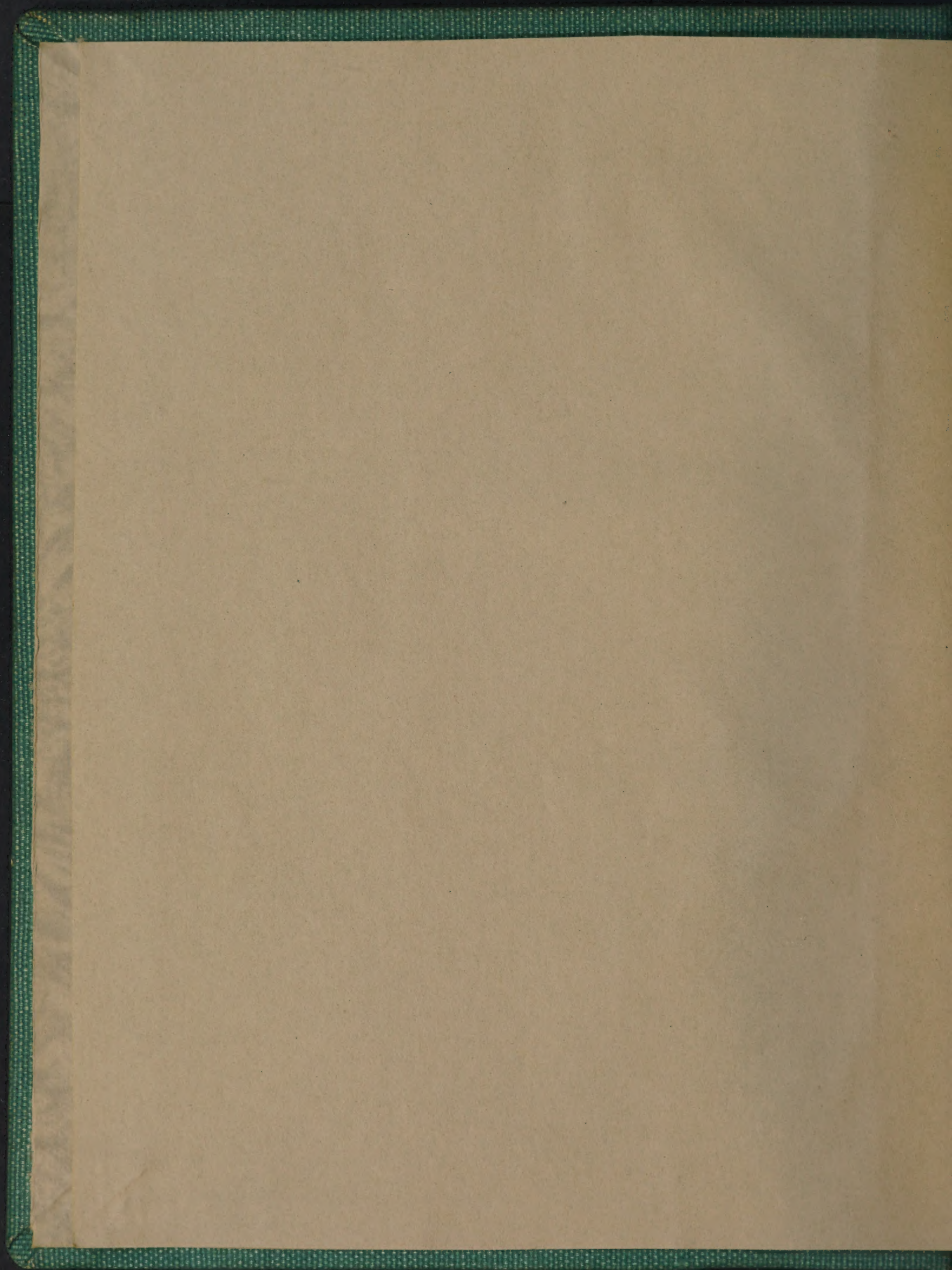


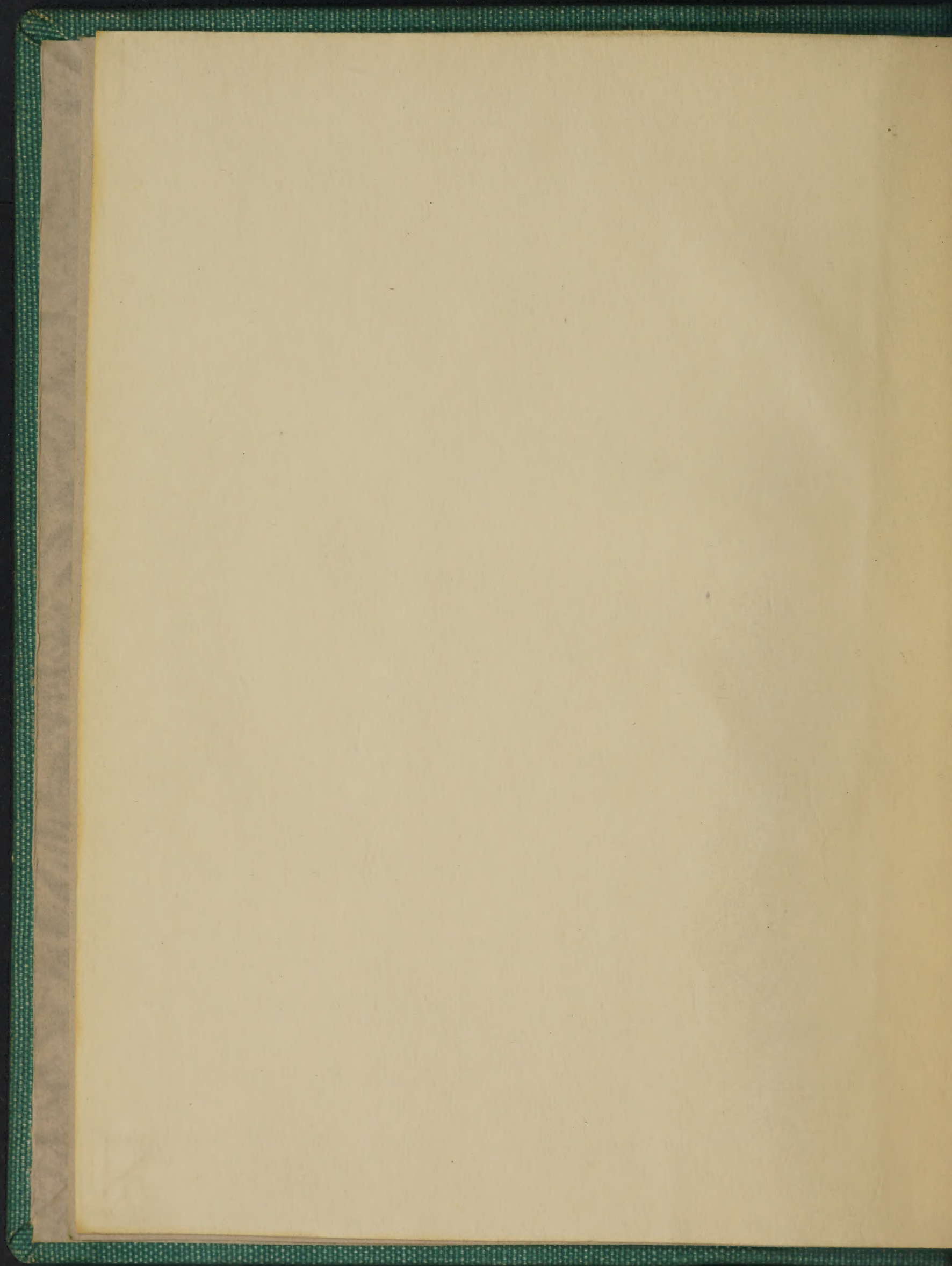
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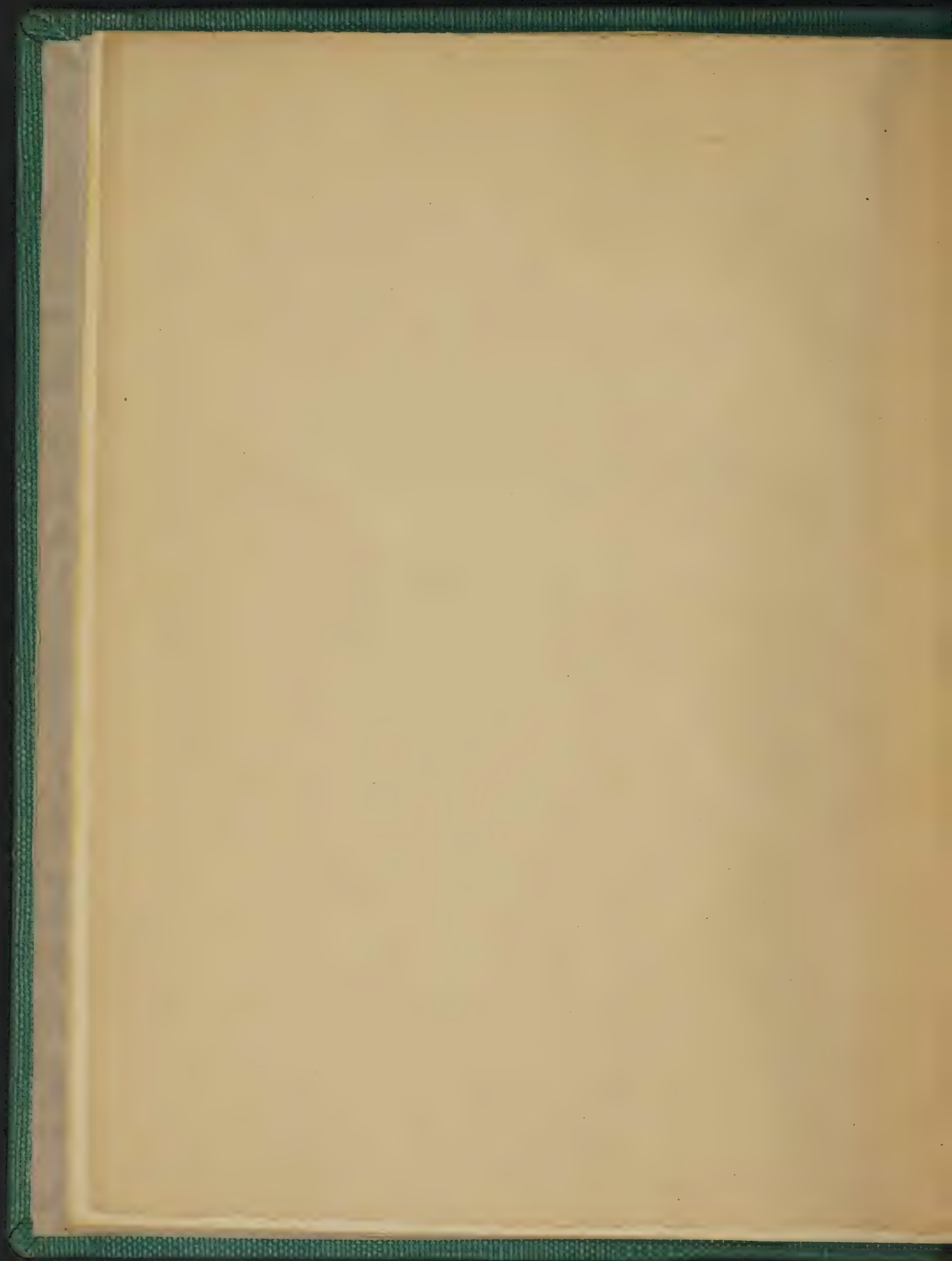
Presented by the Author

to

George Laurence Gomme Esq.

Jan'y 1900.

DON QUIXOTE AND BRITISH ART.



DON QUIXOTE
AND
BRITISH ART.

A PAPER READ IN
THE GALLERY OF THE ROYAL BRITISH ARTISTS,
APRIL 28, 1900.

BY

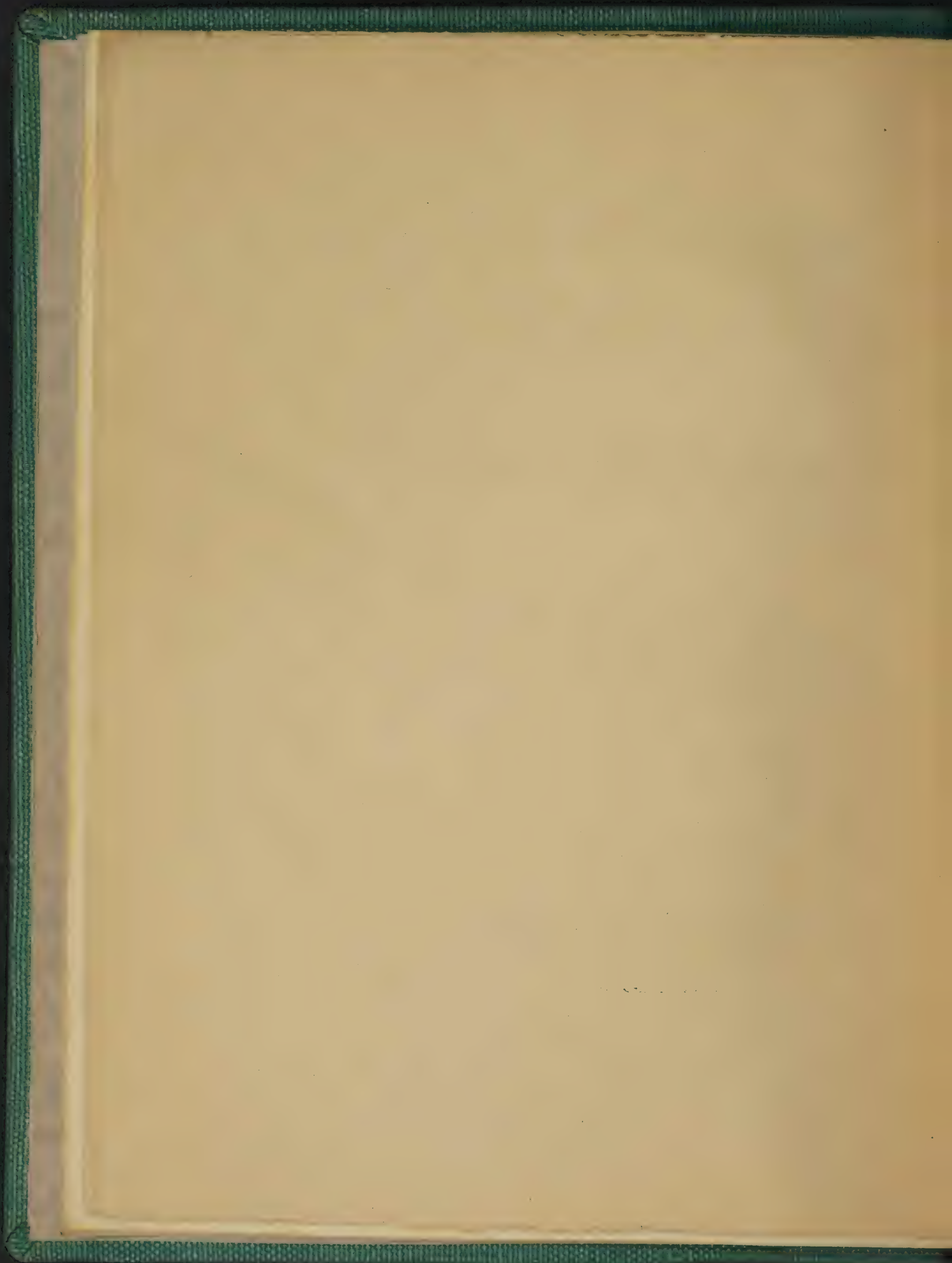
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DON QUIXOTE AND BRITISH ART.

IT IS with extreme diffidence I stand here this afternoon. That an English amateur, neither a painter nor a man of letters, should address you in a Gallery of British Artists, upon a foreign work of the imagination in connection with British Art, savours of arrogance if not of impertinence. That your respected President has invited me to do so is not a sufficient excuse for my temerity. I seek one rather in the fact that England has been first and foremost among nations, not even excepting Spain, in promoting the cult of Cervantes, and I take refuge behind those of my fellow countrymen who with both pen and pencil have laboured earnestly, and not in vain, to make known and appreciated among us the deeds and works of the Hero of Lepanto.

With the life of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, noble and romantic as it is, we have not to concern ourselves to-day. Suffice it to mention, by way of fixing clearly the epoch, that he was born in 1547; that he was soldier, poet, dramatist, novelist, and author of one of the greatest—perhaps the greatest—satirical romance ever penned; that he died April 23, 1616, nominally on the same day as our own Shakespeare, but in reality ten days earlier. Thus the world of letters was deprived, almost simultaneously, of the creators of the two most remarkable monomaniacs of fiction—Quixote and Hamlet.

Although I pass over in silence the glorious career of Cervantes, I may be permitted to recall his personal appearance, as it is material to the purpose of this paper. In order to do this I must have recourse to his own writings, for there is neither contemporary description nor portrait of him. He thus describes himself in the preface to the *Novelas Exemplares*:

“This friend might well have caused my portrait, which the famous Don Juan de Jáuregui would have given him, to be engraved and put in the first page of this book, according to custom. By that means he would have gratified my ambition and the wishes of several persons, who would like to know what sort of a face and figure has he who makes bold to come before the world with so many works of his own invention. My friend might have written

under the portrait:—‘This person whom you see here, with an oval visage, chestnut hair, smooth, open forehead, lively eyes, a hooked but well-proportioned nose, a silvery beard that twenty years ago was golden, large moustaches, a small mouth, teeth not much to speak of, for he has but six, in bad condition and worse placed, no two of them corresponding to each other, a figure midway between the two extremes, neither tall nor short, a vivid complexion, rather fair than dark, somewhat stooped in the shoulders, and not very lightfooted.’*

Here, then, we have the figure and face of Cervantes at the age of sixty-six years. A handsome man rather than otherwise, for the description, although written by himself, I accept as perfectly truthful.

I have said we possess no portrait of Cervantes, *i.e.*, none painted by a contemporary artist who knew him, consequently no authentic portrait. That by JÁUREGUI, just mentioned, is unfortunately lost.

A likeness of Cervantes undoubtedly figured in the collection of portraits of contemporary celebrities drawn by another friend of his, FRANCISCO PACHECO, in black and red chalk, but it is not among the remains of that collection which have come down to us.

The resemblance which Sr. Asensio y Toledo supposed he had discovered in the person of a boatman in one of PACHECO’S pictures must, I fear, be

* The translation is that of Walter Kelly. *The Exemplary Novels.*
London: H. G. Bohn. MDCCCLV.

discarded as apocryphal, in spite of the arguments adduced by Sr. Asensio in favour of its authenticity, and although it has been reproduced on two occasions by English publishers.

We have then no portrait of Cervantes drawn by a contemporary artist.

When J. and R. Tonson projected their great edition of *Don Quixote*, published in 1738, a life of the author was specially written for the work, and efforts were made to obtain a portrait of him. These endeavours, however, proved fruitless, and it was decided to create one.

The descriptive passage which I have just read to you was placed in the hands of WILLIAM KENT, who produced from it the representation, which, engraved by GEORGE VERTUE, became the progenitor of most of the succeeding supposed portraits of Cervantes.

Underneath the engraving are the words "por el mismo," or when applied to an English translation, "by himself," which might lead to the supposition that Cervantes had painted his own picture, but which signify simply that the likeness is not authentic, but was made from the writer's description of himself.

KENT'S design has been much criticised—stiff, formal, conventional it certainly is, and scarcely that which a Cervantophile would conjure up as a satisfactory depiction of his idol.

When, in 1780, the Spanish Academy produced their important edition of their great classic, a portrait was again sought, and this time found—not a painting of the time, but a copy made from a picture done during the lifetime of Cervantes. Such was the verdict of the Academy. Other judges were less sanguine, and eventually pronounced the portrait adopted by the Academy to be a faked-up picture copied more or less exactly from the engraving by VERTUE after KENT. The polemics were somewhat bitter, and the discussion need not further occupy us. Suffice it for our purpose that the first portrait of Cervantes was invented by an Englishman.

Before we enter on the subject proper of the present paper, a doubt arises in my mind as to whether a work of the imagination should ever be illustrated—whether the reader should not rather be left entirely to the author without the intervention of a third party.

The majority of readers, I fear, are apt to amuse themselves with the pictures in preference to thinking out for themselves the author's meaning. Nor does the objection (if one there be) rest here. Books as a rule are illustrated inadequately, or incorrectly, or they are over illustrated. Let me explain. It seldom happens that a work of fiction is illustrated during the lifetime of its author—generally many years later, when customs and costumes have altered, and another

fashion in art as well as in dress may have sprung up. An enterprising publisher thinks that the revival of such and such a novel or poem might prove lucrative with the addition of a few pictures. An artist is called in—either one in vogue at the moment, or, should cost be an object, one who will do the work cheaply. No thought as to whether the genius of the artist corresponds, or is on a level with that of the author. The artist reads rapidly and carelessly, and produces designs not in accordance with the text, or he is ambitious and strives to outdo the writer. In either case the interpretation is false, and the reader misled. I am stating an extreme, but by no means an uncommon case.

For a book then to be properly illustrated, the designs should be made by the author. But few men possess in an equal degree the talent of writing and the skill of delineation. Nor can I call to mind an instance of an author having illustrated his own book in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

The next best plan would be for the author and artist to work together. This has been done on several occasions and with far more pleasing results.

It sometimes happens that a skilful draughtsman renders a book *his* rather than that of the creator, and instances might even be adduced of books rescued from oblivion by the talent of the illustrator. The poems of Samuel Rogers (London, 1830, 1834), for

instance, would probably be less prized were the pages not adorned by the poetical landscapes of Turner and the graceful figures of Stothard; and I might name more than one volume the longevity of which is due to the clever etchings of George Cruikshank.

But if the poem or the novel should not be illustrated (I do not say they should not, but merely throw out the suggestion), one thing I would strongly advocate, viz., that the painter should have recourse to a well-known author for his subjects more frequently than is at present the custom. Let me not be supposed to insinuate that he who wields the brush has not a soul as elevated as has he who uses the pen, or that the mind of the limner is not as full of beautiful thoughts as that of the poet, but the borrowing for his subject of a scene or episode from some great book would tend to unite more closely the two arts.

In my boyhood I well remember that the Royal Academy, the only picture gallery I had the opportunity of visiting, was full of such paintings. On my return home I took the book from my father's shelves, and many a poem has been introduced to me in this manner. The poem was thus impressed on my mind, the picture still lingers in my memory.

Surely the delineation of a spot celebrated in history or fiction, or of an incident in a familiar book

must possess more general interest than that of some unknown or imaginary landscape, or of the trivial, vapid figure subjects so common in the yearly exhibitions of our time.*

All the works of Cervantes have attracted, in a greater or less degree, the limner's attention, for from all can inspiration be obtained, but none is so justly popular as *Don Quixote*. Consequently I shall pass over altogether these comparatively minor writings, and confine my remarks entirely to the masterpiece. And I would crave permission to cite the opinion I have already expressed on that remarkable romance :

I know no book so pre-eminently suitable for illustration as *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha*. In its marvellous pages will be found everything that the artist can possibly desire. Will he delineate human character? Where can be found types more varied, more distinctly marked? From the duke and duchess to the galley slaves, from the knight and his squire to the urchins of Barcelona, one and all possess individuality. Does he seek scenery? The inhospitable plains of La Mancha, and the rugged, picturesque passes of the Sierra Morena furnish it in abundant variety. Animals are there, and remarkable ones, oxen, sheep, birds, Sancho's ass, his master's horse and his "galgo corriente"—all studies of breed and idiosyncrasy. The costume is remarkably varied, the picturesque garments

* Since the above suggestion was made the idea has been more fully worked out in an unsigned article, entitled, "Literature and the Picture Galleries," which appeared in *Literature*, Number for May 12, 1900.

of the 17th century being mingled with the earlier armour and knightly accoutrements of that chivalry which Cervantes "smiled away." Ludicrous situations, of every possible kind, abound." *

I added: "It must be owned, I fear, that no work of art emanating from Spain's most famous literary production can be placed in the very foremost rank." To this I would subjoin that the book has never been illustrated in an adequate and absolutely satisfactory manner.

Nor is this difficult of explanation. *Don Quixote* seems a book easy to grapple with either brush or pencil—it is in truth a very difficult one. Easy enough to depict the droll situations into which the hero is allowed to fall—difficult successfully to portray the hero himself, or render the spirit and meaning of the book.

Did the book contain nothing more than what appears on the surface—the humiliations and buffets inflicted on a lanky madman and his obese serving man—it would never have come down to us. It is the insight into human nature, the genial satire, the philosophy, the unparalleled skill with which the characters of master and man are developed and contrasted—the ideal with the material—that constitute the merit of the work. This cannot be

* Preface to *An Iconography of Don Quixote*, London. Issued by the Bibliographical Society, July, 1895. 4°.

transferred to canvas, metal or stone. And just this development of character causes a further difficulty. The qualities of the Knight unfold themselves as the narrative proceeds, and the Quixote of the second part becomes a philosopher rather than a monomaniac.

What I wish to convey to you is more aptly expressed by Sir Walter Scott, who, in a letter (August 21, 1804) to Ellis concerning some proposed engraved illustrations for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, remarks :

After all, perhaps, nothing is more difficult than for a painter to adopt the author's ideas of an imaginary character, especially when it is founded on traditions to which the artist is a stranger. I should like at least to be at his elbow when at work.

Don Quixote has been treated generally as a book for children and be-pictured accordingly. Here lies the error. It is in fact a work of profound philosophy.

Let us now recall some of the artists who have worked on Spain's greatest romance. Time will allow the mention of the principal ones only, and these, for the sake of convenience and in order to avoid any attempt at classification by merit or importance, I will take as nearly as can be in chronological order.

We begin then with the edition of J. and R. Tonson, 1738, in four quarto vols., containing a portrait,

already mentioned, and 68 engravings from drawings (with one exception) by JOHN VANDERBANK, engraved mostly by GERARD VANDER GUCHT. The exceptional plate, No. 3, is by HOGARTH, although it does not bear his signature. Concerning these engravings suggestion and controversy have arisen. It is difficult for many to understand why VANDERBANK should have been selected as the designer in preference to HOGARTH, who had also competed for the work. Or, VANDERBANK chosen, why one engraving by HOGARTH should have been employed, and that without signature, whereas the other 67 engravings are signed by both designer and engraver. Then about their artistic merit, while on the one hand they have been extolled as bold and vigorous, they have on the other been stigmatised as "incredibly bad, vulgar and grotesque, without any spark of real humour, or sense of harmony with the text."* But praise or blame apart, the fact remains that these engravings are the first attempt to illustrate *Don Quixote* thoroughly, and that they preceded by forty-two years the far less satisfactory illustrations of the Spanish Academy.

HOGARTH then was rejected, but of all English artists WILLIAM HOGARTH seems to be the one most capable of doing justice to CERVANTES. Allowance made for his ignorance of Spain and

* Mr. H. E. Watts. *Life of Cervantes*.

things Spanish, he had every other requirement—satire, humour, intensity, fixedness of purpose and a thorough grasp of his art. Yet the half-dozen engravings to be found in his works cannot be classed among his masterpieces. They are no doubt those rejected by Tonson, probably through the influence of his enemy KENT. In the same year he issued his “original print” of *Sancho at the Feast*, invented and engraved by WILLIAM HOGARTH, thus throwing down the gauntlet to the short-sighted publishers.

We cannot but regret that the connection between two such geniuses as CERVANTES and HOGARTH was not more intimate and prolonged.

A curious but inartistic set of engravings are the twenty, including a frontispiece, engraved by RENNOLDSON and RYDER, after designs by WALE, and published in a translation of *Don Quixote* by C. H. Wilmot, London, 1774. They are enclosed in elegant frames, superior to the engravings they surround. All, except the frontispiece, have above the design a description of the subject of the plate in prose, and four lines in rhyme underneath.

FRANCIS HAYMAN was, as you know, one of the founders of the Royal Academy, and contributed two scenes from *Don Quixote* to their first exhibition in 1769. But previously to that date he had carefully studied the doings of the Knight of La Mancha, and

produced some twenty-eight drawings which were so well received at the time that he had an order to paint two copies for Madrid. Whether he executed the commission or not I have been unable to ascertain. His drawings, which are in the print room of the British Museum, have been engraved more than once: on the first occasion for the quarto edition of London, 1755. Daye's opinion that "HAYMAN'S manner is decisive, and firm, but hard, and his drawing is incorrect," well applies to the productions in question; to which stricture I may perhaps add that they are at times theatrical and somewhat coarse.

The pleasing figures of THOMAS STOTHARD are found in more than one edition of *Don Quixote*. In 1782 he illustrated the work in Harrison's *Novelist's Magazine* with sixteen compositions. To W. Miller's edition of 1801 he contributed seven designs; and he invented four title-pages and four illustrations for that of John Sharpe in 1809. His Quixotesque paintings are numerous: three were exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1820 and 1821, and in the British Institution of 1841, respectively. One is to be seen at South Kensington, and I own one in his best manner, representing the Captive and Zorayda surprised by her Father. STOTHARD possessed humour, but of a delicate and refined order, and he was more at home in sentimental than in purely grotesque scenes. His Sancho Panza is thought by some to be the creation which inspired LESLIE.

The *Artist's Repository* is a publication probably not much consulted now-a-days even by those for whom it was intended, yet in Vol. I for 1788 are two engravings of interest for the Cervantist. In them Sancho Panza is represented in four different situations—pugnacity, alarm, hilarity, mock dignity. They were produced to illustrate a lecture on the Polite Arts by FRANCIS FITZGERALD, drawing master. By many they may be deemed trivial and worthless, and, judged exclusively from an art point of view they may be so. But inasmuch as they are an attempt to illustrate character—to produce interest in the one person without the aid of incident, I hold them worthy of our consideration.

Towards the close of the 18th century RICHARD CORBOULD executed a set of drawings for "Cooke's Pocket Edition of Select Novels," in which series *Don Quixote* was included. It was the beginning of the age of "Keepsakes," "Books of Beauty," "Poetic Wreaths," "Illustrated Annals," and kindred publications, notable for engravings of fine and careful execution. Such handy, pretty books are no longer in fashion. I am sorry for it. The engravings in Cooke's edition are enclosed in fancy frames, designed by a special artist, and composed of objects appropriate to the subject of the engraving they surround. The effect in my humble judgment is pleasing.

A work of importance is the picture by THEOPHILUS CLARKE representing Dorothea at

the stream, full of grace and expression. In 1802 it was engraved by WILLIAM SAY in mezzotint. The original picture is now in the collection of M. Groult of Paris.

Two handy editions of *Don Quixote*, of 1809 and 1818, are embellished by engravings from designs by T. UWINS. The same pleasing artist exhibited paintings at the Royal Academy of 1842 and 1848, the chief figure in each being Dorothea. The great fault of UWINS is that he is entirely English. Nor is this difficult to understand when we find him writing about one of the pictures just mentioned: "I have done another (picture) from the sketch I made on the little wooden bridge at Wynn Stay . . . Into this I have put Dorothea surprised by the curate and barber . . . A mountain stream in one country is very much like a mountain stream in another, and I do not doubt my picture is quite as Spanish as if I had been on the spot."

The home of ROBERT SMIRKE must have been long under the spell of CERVANTES. His daughter, Mary, translated *Don Quixote*, and the number of pictures of episodes from the book painted by the academician himself is remarkable. His diploma picture, as you all know, is one of them, and I am the fortunate owner of three others. But apart from his isolated pictures, SMIRKE has produced the most beautiful series of illustrations ever done for *Don*

Quixote, full of poetry, grace, delicacy and humour. If they have a defect it is that they are not sufficiently Spanish. No less than sixteen engravers aided in the interpretation of SMIRKE'S paintings, and with an evenness and uniformity most striking. The set, which exists in at least three states, is universally prized, nor have foreign critics withheld their praises from the seventy-four engravings which adorn Mary Smirke's translation, above-mentioned, published in 1818.

In 1819 Thomas McLean published an edition of *Don Quixote*, embellished with twenty-four engravings signed J. H. CLARK. They were lightly worked and intended for colouring, in which condition they are usually found. I possess them in both states. They are very grotesque, albeit well conceived and executed. CLARK illustrated *Gil Blas* in similar fashion.

It would be surprising had *Don Quixote* not passed through the hands of the prolific book illustrator RICHARD WESTALL. For an edition published in 1820 he invented four title-pages and twenty compositions, which were prettily engraved by CHARLES HEATH. The set was well received and sold separately. I have searched in vain for any painting, or water-colour drawing (in which WESTALL so much excelled) from Cervantes' novel.

Of the engravings in the pretty little four volume edition published by J. Bumpus, in 1821, with one

engraving for each volume, we know the engraver's name only, WAINWRIGHT. He has executed his task most satisfactorily.

We are all familiar with the important painting by C. R. LESLIE, entitled *Sancho and the Duchess*, formerly in the National Gallery, now in the Tate Collection. It is not the original picture painted for the Earl of Egremont and exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1824, but one of two replicas, that done for Mr. Vernon. It has been twice engraved : by R. STAINES in 1849, by J. and G. P. NICHOLLS in 1856 ; while the picture at Petworth was engraved by W. HUMPHRYS in 1838. From these facts the popularity, if not the merit, of LESLIE'S creation may be gauged. It is in truth a remarkable and meritorious achievement. Whether we consider the clever grouping, the graceful and appropriate attitudes of the women, the rich, varied but harmonious colouring of their garments, the way in which the story is told, at once clear and evident—all excite our pleasure and admiration. But the point on which I would lay particular stress is the *character* displayed in the person of Sancho. The expression of his face, his posture, the way in which he holds his finger to his nose—every stroke of the Master's brush has a meaning. The dullest beholder cannot fail to comprehend the manner of man he is, or what he is doing. Were the figure of Sancho deprived of its accessories, were it

cut out of the canvas altogether, it would form a picture of itself, would be as unmistakably the man described by Cervantes, and make evident what he was doing.

This bringing out of *character* I take to be one of the chief, if not the chief cause of LESLIE'S success. And I would further call attention to the studies of Heads of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza by him, reproduced by lithography in 1827. Full of feeling, intellect and appropriate expression, they show, more than could any extensive composition, how careful had been LESLIE'S study of his author, and how he depended for success (as every artist should) on the individuality and thorough development of his figures rather than on the incident in which they are for the moment taking part.

Sancho and the Duchess is not LESLIE'S only Quixotesque picture; he borrowed several other subjects from the same inexhaustible source; they have been described by Tom Taylor, and need not be specially noticed here.

In the Print Room of the British Museum are two beautiful mezzotints by WILLIAM SAY from pictures by J. PORTER. I possess two others engraved by CHARLES TURNER after the same painter. All four depict different subjects from *Don Quixote*, and were published in 1826. In each composition PORTER has inserted a number of figures—more than the text of Cervantes authorises.

HENRY ALKEN, the elder, the "Ben Tallyho" of sporting prints, produced in 1831 his *Illustrations of Don Quixote*, engraved by JOHN ZEITTER, without letterpress, nor were they destined for any edition of the book. They are bold, spirited, effective, full of movement, although somewhat overdrawn, not very Spanish, or faithful to the text.

The charming artist RICHARD PARKES BONINGTON, whose early demise was so severe a loss to English art, tried his hand on the hero of Cervantes. He has depicted the Don in his study pensively perusing a romance of chivalry. Armour and warlike objects are absent, the young artist's object evidently being to portray the literary or studious, rather than the adventurous bent of his hero. What has become of the drawing I know not, but it has been preserved for us in an engraving by SANGSTER published in *Le Keepsake Français* for 1831.

Both brothers CRUIKSHANK illustrated *Don Quixote*—ROBERT in a series of twenty-four wood-engravings, remarkable for crude grotesqueness rather than real humour or fidelity to the text. The edition which carried them appeared in parts, badly printed on infamous paper; GEORGE in a set of etchings, done in 1833, for the convenient and well-printed volumes edited by Thomas Roscoe. The genius of GEORGE CRUIKSHANK would seem to be at home among the comical mishaps of the Knight of La

Mancha, and these fifteen etchings are undoubtedly among his best. They are full of humour, English rather than Spanish, and the engraving—as is usual with him—is superior to the drawing. Each volume has the additional attraction of a portrait by KENNY MEADOWS: of Quixote, Sancho, and Dulcinea.

At the early age of twenty-nine HENRY LIVERSEEGE was taken from the world of art to which he was so ardently devoted. Yet during his brief career he had produced some good work—notably two paintings of the Knight of La Mancha, in both of which he has depicted his hero in his bookish rather than his chivalrous mood. The first painting shows him pondering over a romance of chivalry, the second reading his famous letter to Sancho. Both were engraved in 1834 in mezzotint, the former by J. E. COOMBS, the latter by J. EGAN. The Don in his study was exhibited at Manchester in 1831, and is generally thought to be LIVERSEEGE'S masterpiece. Allan Cunningham is warm in its praise, and remarks: "The grave dignity and touched loftiness of soul of the inimitable hero of Cervantes are finely embodied." Both works are careful studies of character, action being altogether discarded.

A picture by J. G. MIDDLETON, representing Dorothea washing her feet in the stream, was exhibited at the British Institution in 1834. In the

following year it was engraved by J. GOODYEAR for *The Literary Souvenir*. It is elegant in design, full of rustic simplicity, but quite English.

C. KNIGHT has put his name as engraver to twelve humorous and well executed engravings contained in an abridged edition of *Don Quixote*, printed for A. K. Newman & Co. in 1837. This little volume was issued in an outer wrapper, in compartments, and illustrated with heads and four scenes from the novel, all cleverly designed and finely engraved. It is unfortunate that these outer wrappers, sometimes of artistic worth, are apt to get mutilated or dirtied, and, unless very precise instructions to the contrary are given, destroyed by the binder.

In the Print Room of the British Museum and in the Nottingham Castle Museum may be seen clever water colour drawings by JOHN MASSEY WRIGHT, from subjects taken from *Don Quixote*, whether engraved or not I cannot say. Another drawing by him in my possession was engraved by E. SMITH. It represents Carrasco's visit to Quixote. The Bachelor is on his knees before the Don, while the Housekeeper holds up her arms in amazement, and the Niece looks on in demure silence.

No artist of our time has drunk deeper at the Cervantick* source than SIR JOHN GILBERT. Some

* The word is not of my coining ; it will be found in *Tristram Shandy*.

of his earliest efforts were Quixotesque; and during his long career he produced studies in oil and water colour, not only of the Knight and Squire, but even of the Niece and Housekeeper. In 1842 Charles Daly published a *Don Quixote*, with a frontispiece and sixteen engravings on wood designed by GILBERT, but scarcely worthy of his broad and masterly pencil. He must be judged by his numerous original paintings and drawings, or by the engravings from them to be found in the early numbers of periodicals such as the *Illustrated London News*, rather than by the edition above mentioned.

Shortly before his death GILBERT presented several of his works, both in oil and in water colour, to the Corporation of London, and his painting of the Niece and Housekeeper may now be seen in the Art Gallery at Guildhall.

I am the fortunate owner of two important oil paintings and two exquisite water colour drawings by him, depicting episodes in his favourite book.

The talent of ARTHUR BOYD HOUGHTON is more apparent in his black and white drawings than in his oil paintings. He was a thoroughly successful book-illustrator, and his *Don Quixote*, with one hundred illustrations, issued in 1866, must rank among his happiest achievements. That the favour with which HOUGHTON'S designs were received

depended to a great extent on the admirable manner in which they were engraved by the brothers DALZIEL cannot be doubted.

I have on my walls a small oil painting by HOUGHTON of one of the subjects engraved in the book. It goes far to prove what I have just advanced, that he was stronger in black and white than in colours.

I have alluded to authors illustrating their own works. Our great novelist, W. M. THACKERAY, was one of these. But he occupied his facile pencil on other than his own writings, and has left us two conceptions of Don Quixote, slight and incomplete, but undoubtedly interesting. The one will be found in *Thackerayana*, 1875, the other in *The Orphan of Pimlico*, 1876.

Kindness to animals is a virtue not lost sight of by Cervantes, and many pathetic touches are produced by Sancho's love for his donkey. This did not escape the attention of SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, and no doubt induced him to paint the small panel, now at South Kensington, in which Sancho is depicted sharing the contents of his wallet with Dapple. In the honest open countenance of Sancho cruelty of any sort would be out of the question. This "gem of a picture," as it has been called, was engraved by C. G. LEWIS for the *Art Journal* of 1877.

From an unfinished sketch for the Combat with the Lions, to which Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse has called attention, it appears almost as if SIR EDWIN had the intention, at one time or other, of treating *Don Quixote* more fully. It is to be regretted that he did not carry out that idea.

A recent contribution to Quixotesque depiction will be found in twenty-four paintings by MR. FRANK BRANGWYN. These have passed through my hands and are limned in black and white oils in a bold, vigorous manner, with a view to reproduction by process. They have been reproduced, with the result of so many flat, smudgy, indistinct representations in an edition of *Don Quixote* published in 1895.

The sixteen illustrations by MR. W. H. ROBINSON, found in the *Don Quixote* of Bliss, Sands & Co., 1897, are almost in outline, with blocks of white contrasted with blocks of black, without shading, modelling or gradation, a kind of work not yet popular in England. MR. ROBINSON seems to have taken DANIEL VIERGE for his model, and to have attempted to treat *Don Quixote* as VIERGE has treated *Pablo de Segovia*. The idea can scarcely be considered happy. Besides, the great power undoubtedly possessed by the foreign artist appears to be denied to our countryman.

But perhaps I ought to have passed over these later attempts in silence; for now that science and mechanism have done away with burin and needle,

and the engraver's artistic rendering has been superseded by process work, any record of these "flat, stale and unprofitable" reproductions may seem superfluous.

We have now glanced at some of the principal artists who have illustrated *Don Quixote*, or whose designs taken from that book have been engraved. Those whose works have not been engraved are more numerous. I may mention, *inter alios*,

J. A. ATKINSON	J. C. HORSLEY
EDGAR BUNDY	ARTHUR LEMON
GEORGE CATTERMOLE	W. E. LOCKHART
GEORGE COLE	RALPH PEACOCK
A. L. EGG	J. PETTIE
W. P. FRITH	L. J. POTT
CHARLES GREEN	THOMAS ROWLANDSON

J. D. WATSON,

some of whose productions are in my own collection. To make a list of such pictures has been my aim since some time, but as they are either in private galleries, to which access is not always possible, or in the studios of the artists who painted them, the task is not easy. May I appeal for aid in this matter to the Members of the Society of British Artists.

So far I have spoken only of complete editions of *Don Quixote* bearing illustrations of which the names of the designers, and generally of the engravers

are known. There are, however, many editions illustrated anonymously. Of these I shall mention but one, viz., that of London, 1687, with the translation of J. Philips, and embellished with a frontispiece and sixteen engravings on wood, remarkable rather for vigour and quaintness than for artistic beauty.

Nor have I touched on chap books, abbreviated editions of *Don Quixote*, volumes of extracts, or those produced exclusively for children with unsigned illustrations. They are numerous, and to treat them thoroughly would lead us too far.

I may perhaps mention one chap book, date about 1680-1690, "printed by and for W. O., and sold by H. Green at the Sun and Bible on London Bridge." It contains six unsigned wood-cuts, scarcely worthy of the artist's attention. But to the Cervantophile the publication is especially interesting, as it indicates at what an early date *Don Quixote* was popular in this country, and was read, not by the cultivated only, but by the English people.

A noteworthy volume of extracts is that issued by Rivington in 1820, with four coloured engravings unsigned. It is entitled *The Spirit of Cervantes*. The same book was offered in 1822 by Longman and others with the title *Cervantes as a Novelist*; and again by Charles Tilt in 1831, as *The Spirit of Don Quixote*.

At the beginning of my remarks I expressed my conviction that England stood foremost among nations in doing honour to Cervantes. I wish I could prove the statement as far as Art is concerned. But Art is difficult to measure. Quantity counts for nothing—by quality alone can it be estimated. But who is to be the judge; and how is he to make his appraisal? By comparing picture with picture, engraving with engraving? Impossible.

If we run over rapidly the principal and most important sets of engravings produced in each country, some kind of rough and ready estimate may perhaps be arrived at.

One of the earliest illustrated editions of *Don Quixote* is that of Dordrecht, 1657, with two engraved frontispieces and twenty-four engravings, unsigned, but said to be the work of SOLOMON SAVRY, brother of the publisher. They illustrate a Dutch translation, and are artistically of little value; but they possess interest inasmuch as they were stolen by no less an artist than DIEGO DE OBREGÓN for his edition of 1674, the first illustrated in Spain.

Two early editions emanating from the Low Countries, in Spanish, are those of Bruselas, 1662, and Amberes, 1673, the latter with engravings by F. BOUTTATS.

Returning now to Spain, where many illustrated editions have naturally been produced, the following eleven may be noted as important :

That illustrated by DIEGO DE OBREGÓN, 1674, just mentioned ; that of the Spanish Academy, by CARNICERO and others, 1780, also already noticed ; that by CARNICERO alone, 1782 ; by ANTONIO RODRÍGUEZ, 1797 ; by AUG. NAVARRO and others, 1797 ; by F. ALCÁNTARA and PARET, 1798 ; by J. RIVELLES, 1819 ; by JOSEPH DEL CASTILLO and ANT. CARNICERO, 1832 ; by URRABIETA and others, 1847 ; by L. FERRANT and others, 1859 ; and by RICARDO BALACA, 1880.

Italy affords us two noticeable sets, the one by F. NOVELLI, 1818, and the other by BARTOLOMEO PINELLI.

The greatest book-illustrator of Germany, DANIEL CHODOWIECKI, produced more than one series of engravings for *Don Quixote*, the finest being that of 1780 ; and A. SCHROEDTER, who has painted more than one Quixotesque picture, designed and engraved, in 1863, a noteworthy set of illustrations without any letterpress.

At Copenhagen was published, in 1865, an edition of *Don Quixote* with excellent lithographs after designs by W. MARSTRAND.

Prague furnished a long set of wood-cuts, in 1866, designed by QUIDA MANESA.

MANUEL DE MACEDO illustrated an edition, published at Lisbon in 1877.

In Amsterdam and at The Hague several editions have been produced, but almost invariably with engravings the designs of which had already been used. That of Amsterdam, 1819, has original plates, but they are too crude and grotesque to be worthy of notice.

An edition was issued at Boston, U.S.A., in 1836, with ten indifferent etchings, three of which bear the signature of D. C. JOHNSTON, the remaining seven are bad reproductions of those of GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. There may be others which I have not seen.

We need not fear then to pit British art against that of either of the countries just enumerated, not even against that of Spain, for the sets of illustrations specially mentioned of that country are wanting in one or other of those artistic qualities which would be needed in order to place them in the foremost rank.

We come now to France, where the competition is much more keen.

In the Cabinet d'Estampes at Paris, may be seen a set of one engraved and illustrated title-

page, and thirty-seven engravings, published and probably executed by L. BOISSEVIN, about 1623. There is no letter-press, but the names of the figures and descriptions in French, are engraved within the design. This is the earliest attempt at illustrations for *Don Quixote* with which I am acquainted. It shows that the Spanish romance was popular in France at an early date; it has continued to be so ever since.

The list of French artists who have borrowed subjects from *Don Quixote* is a long one, and includes some of the greatest painters and chief book-illustrators. I may mention, in alphabetical order: H. BARON, BERTALL, BOUCHOT, CHARLET, CHASSELAT, CHOQUET, COURTIN, H. DAUMIER, DECAMPS, DEVÉRIA, C. DUSAULCHOY, E. FOREST, FRAGONARD, FRAIPONT, K. GIRADET, GRANDVILLE, A. L. JANET, EUGÈNE LAMI, LEBARBIER, LEFEBVRE, R. DE MORAINÉ, EDMOND MORIN, CÉLESTIN NANTEUIL, NATOIRE, T. H. ROUSSEAU, G. ROUX, G. STAAL, TÉLORY, HORACE VERNET, WATTEAU, WATTIER, J. WORMS, and H. ZO. All these men have painted one or more pictures, or have made designs, more or less numerous, for engravings.

You must permit me to point out specially three notable sets of French illustrations.

CHARLES COYPEL painted a series of twenty-five pictures of Quixotesque subjects for reproduction in tapestries at the Gobelins. Most of them are now at the Château de Compiègne. In 1723-4 they were engraved, together with six other paintings, by TRESMOLIER, LE BAS, BOUCHER and COCHIN FILS, making thirty-one engravings in all. They were sold separately by the several engravers who executed them. In the following year (1725) they were engraved in London by G. VANDER GUCHT and others, and have since been reproduced times out of number. They are very French, verging on what is termed "*le grand art*," and cannot be pronounced Cervantick.

The convenient edition illustrated by TONY JOHANNOT with nearly five hundred wood engravings besides other ornamentations, published in 1836, cannot be too highly praised. The varied and spirited vignettes of that fertile artist, generally sprinkled in the text, though neither Spanish nor quite faithful to the author's words, carry the reader through the book as by enchantment.

Finally we come to the folio edition produced by Hachette in 1863, with three hundred and seventy-five illustrations of all kinds designed by GUSTAVE DORÉ. These engravings are well known to us all, if not in the ponderous tomes of the French publisher, at any rate in the somewhat

less cumbersome volumes of the English undated edition of Cassell & Co. Opinions differ widely, not so much as to the artistic merit of DORÉ's designs, as to their appropriateness. In versatility and invention they abound, but these qualities are not always sanctioned by the text. They offer a striking example of what I have already alluded to, viz., over-illustration. They are Doré, not Cervantes. This must be the verdict of every true lover of the author.

Against this array of talent we have to place (I mention only artists who have been engraved): the vigorous compositions of VANDERBANK, HOGARTH and HAYMAN; the poetic conceptions of SMIRKE and STOTHARD; the graceful fancies of CORBOULD, THEOPHILUS CLARKE, T. UWINS, WESTALL and MIDDLETON; the humorous depictions of the CRUIKSHANKS, J. H. CLARK and ALKEN; the thoughtful portrayals of LESLIE, BONINGTON and LIVERSEEGE; the bold designs of J. PORTER, J. M. WRIGHT, GILBERT, HOUGHTON and LANDSEER.

In the course of my paper I have expressed my opinion—indeed ventured some criticism upon the pictures and engravings which I have brought under your notice. I wish to point out that such criticism refers in no way to technique or to qualities purely artistic, of which I do not pretend to be a judge, but

rather to their appropriateness, or suitability to the work from which they were taken or which they were intended to illustrate.

In any case, if I have uttered heresy, I am open to conversion.

Of the sister art, Sculpture, I have absolutely nothing to say. Although the tall, lean Knight and the squat Squire have been modelled more than once by foreign artists, I am not aware of their having been similarly treated by an Englishman. We all know the charming statuette by JOHN BELL, representing Dorothea washing her feet in the river, so popular some years ago in Parian marble, but now, like many other good things, out of fashion. This is the only figure by an English sculptor taken from *Don Quixote* with which I am acquainted. Should others exist I should be pleased to have them pointed out.

On the table, ladies and gentlemen, you will find copies of most of the editions of *Don Quixote* and of other books containing engravings about which I have been speaking, at too great a length I fear. I invite you to inspect them.

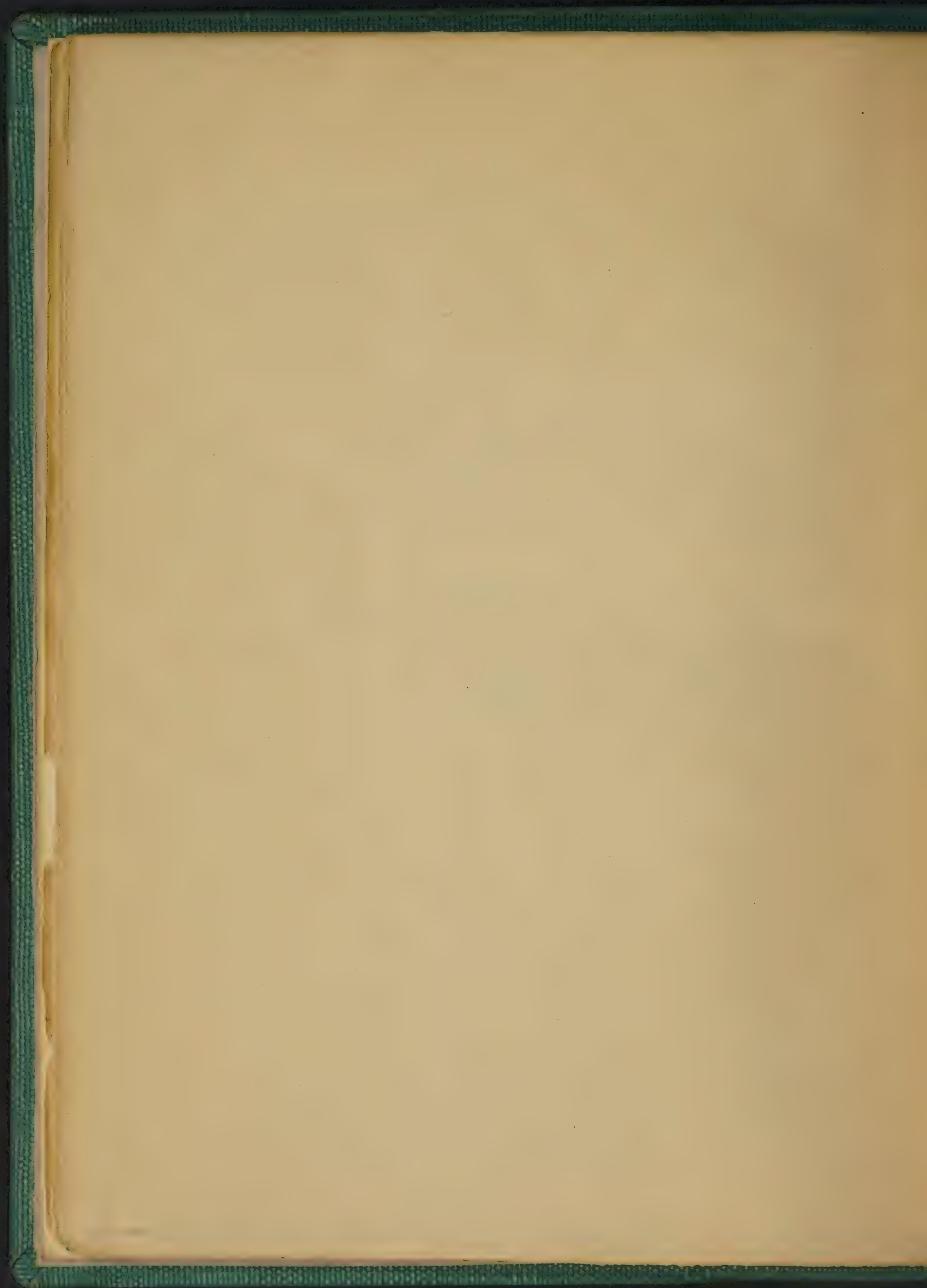
I had even the idea of begging your President to permit me to hang here for the occasion the oil paintings and water colour drawings which I have mentioned. But I at once rebuked myself for harbouring such an intention, which would, as it were,

be bringing coals to Newcastle, and offering a slight to the admirable pictures with which the surrounding walls are so richly furnished.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to express the hope that at the next Exhibition of British Artists several good pictures of Quixotesque, or at any rate of Cervantick, subjects may be found on the walls of this handsome gallery.



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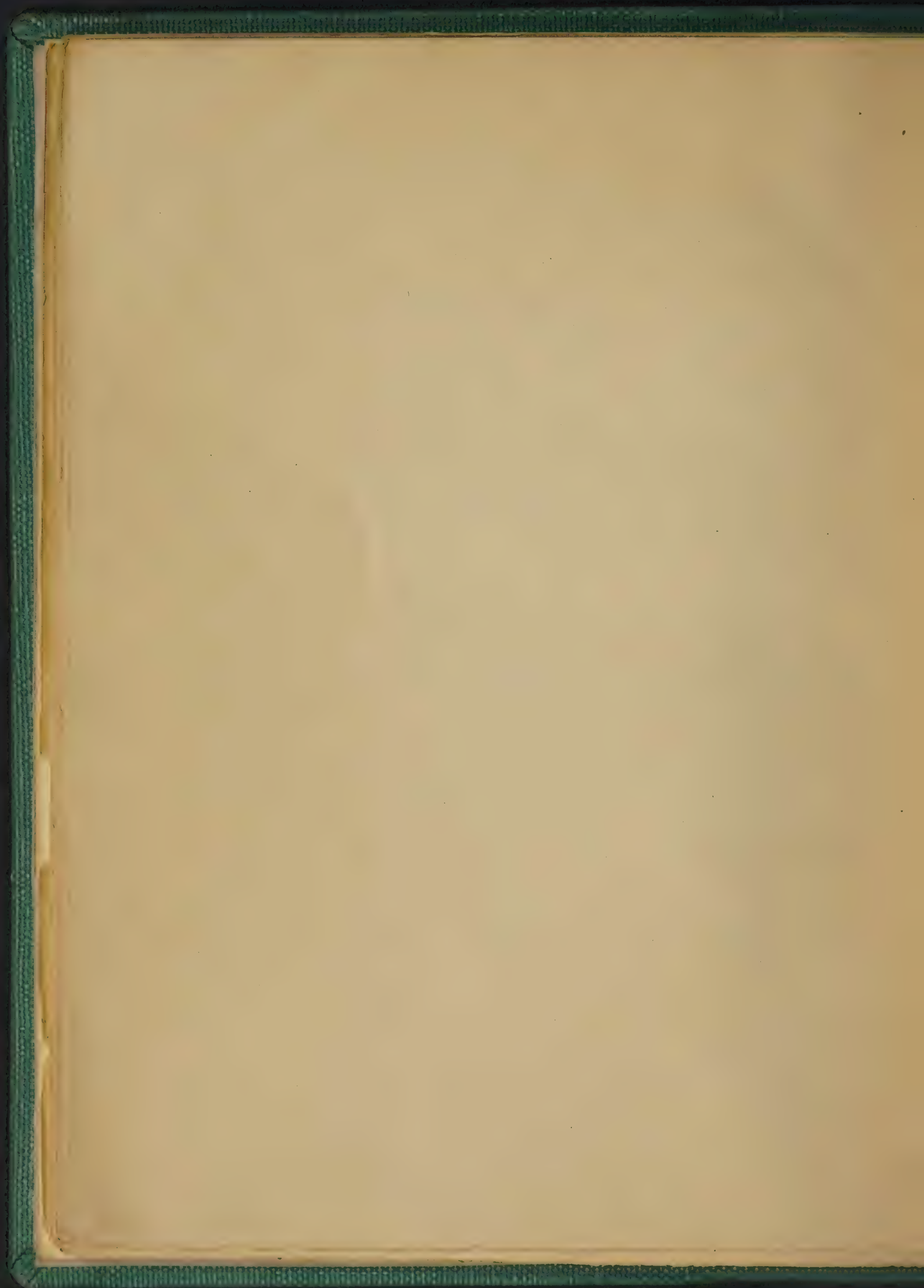
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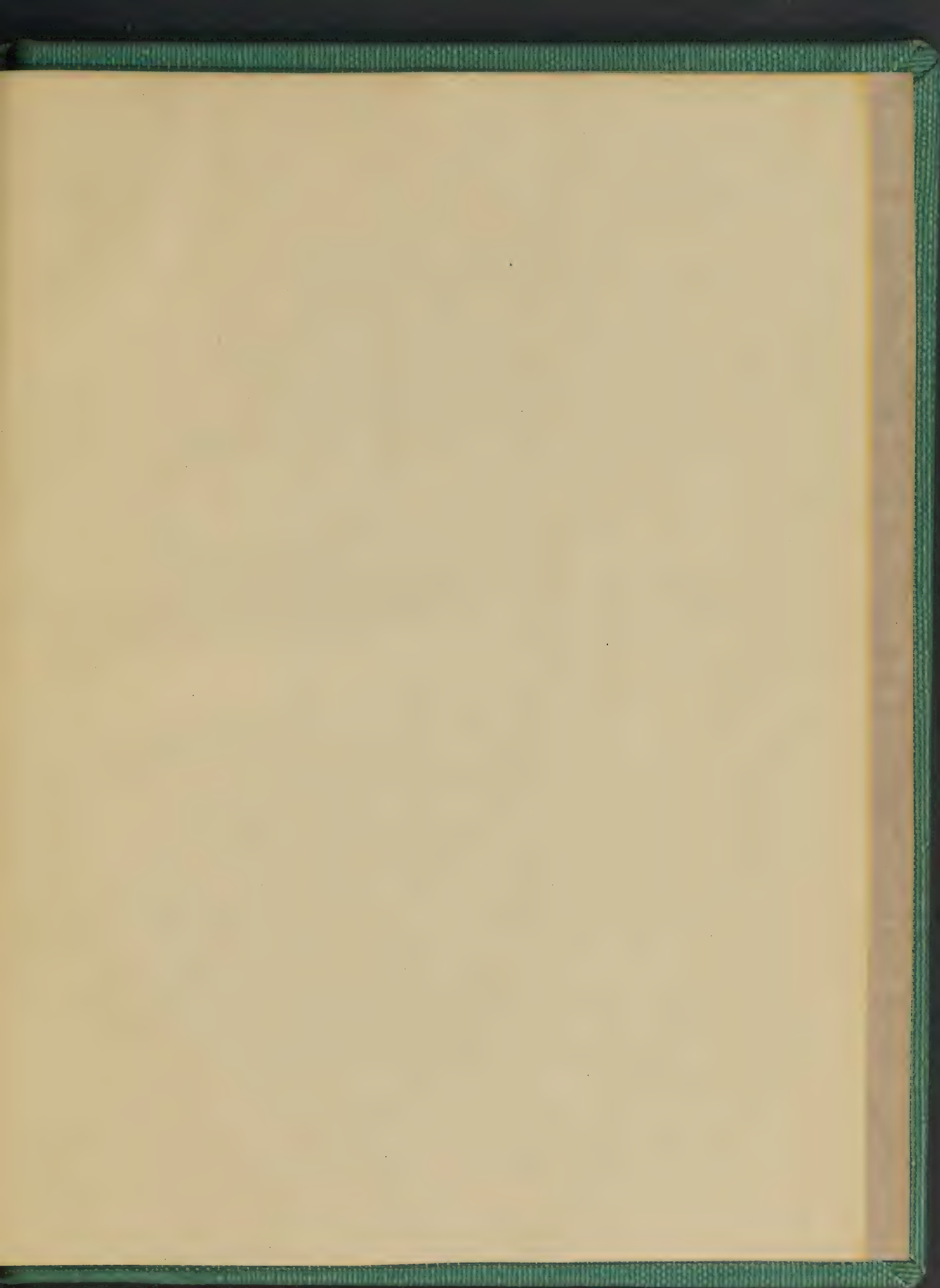
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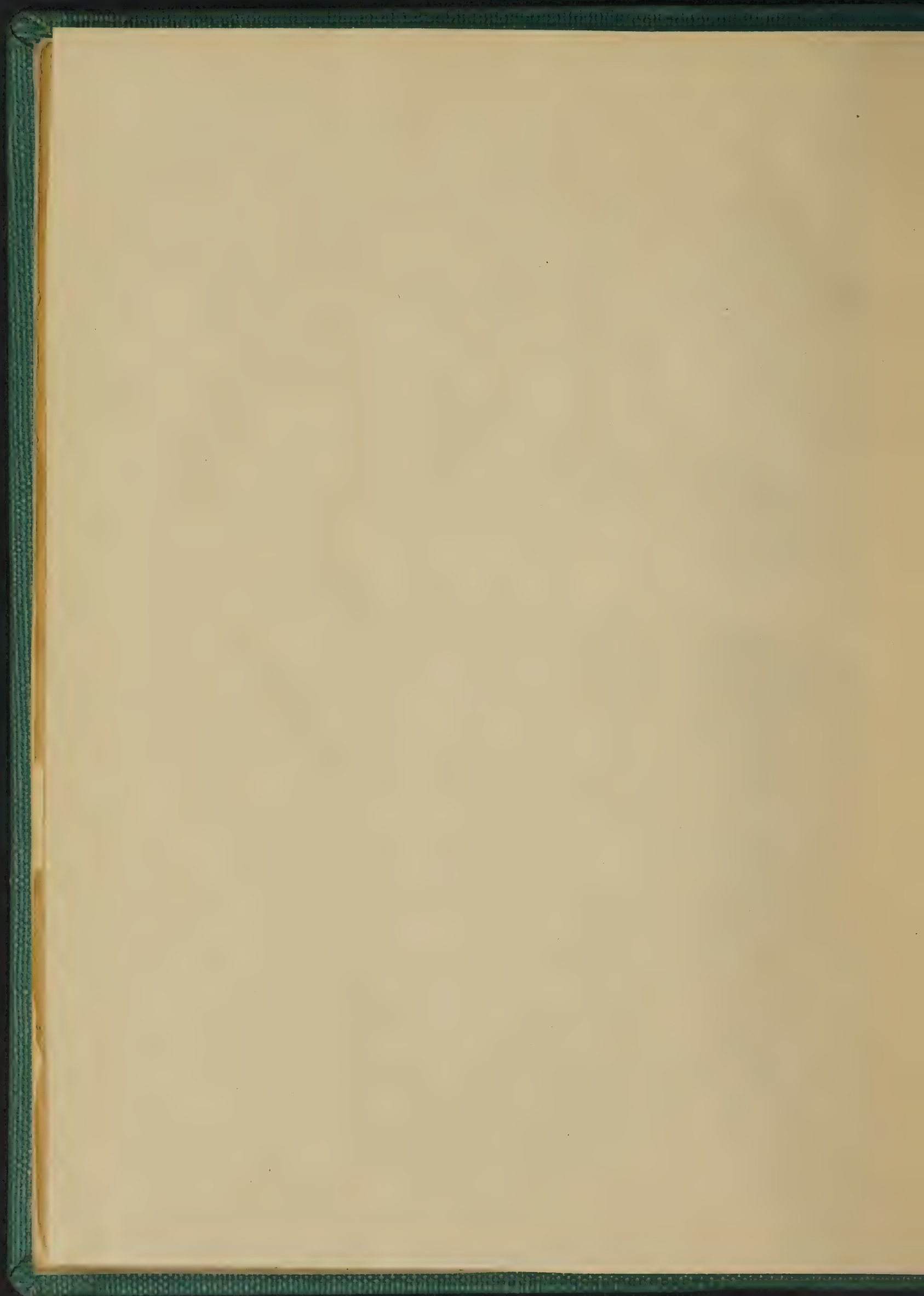
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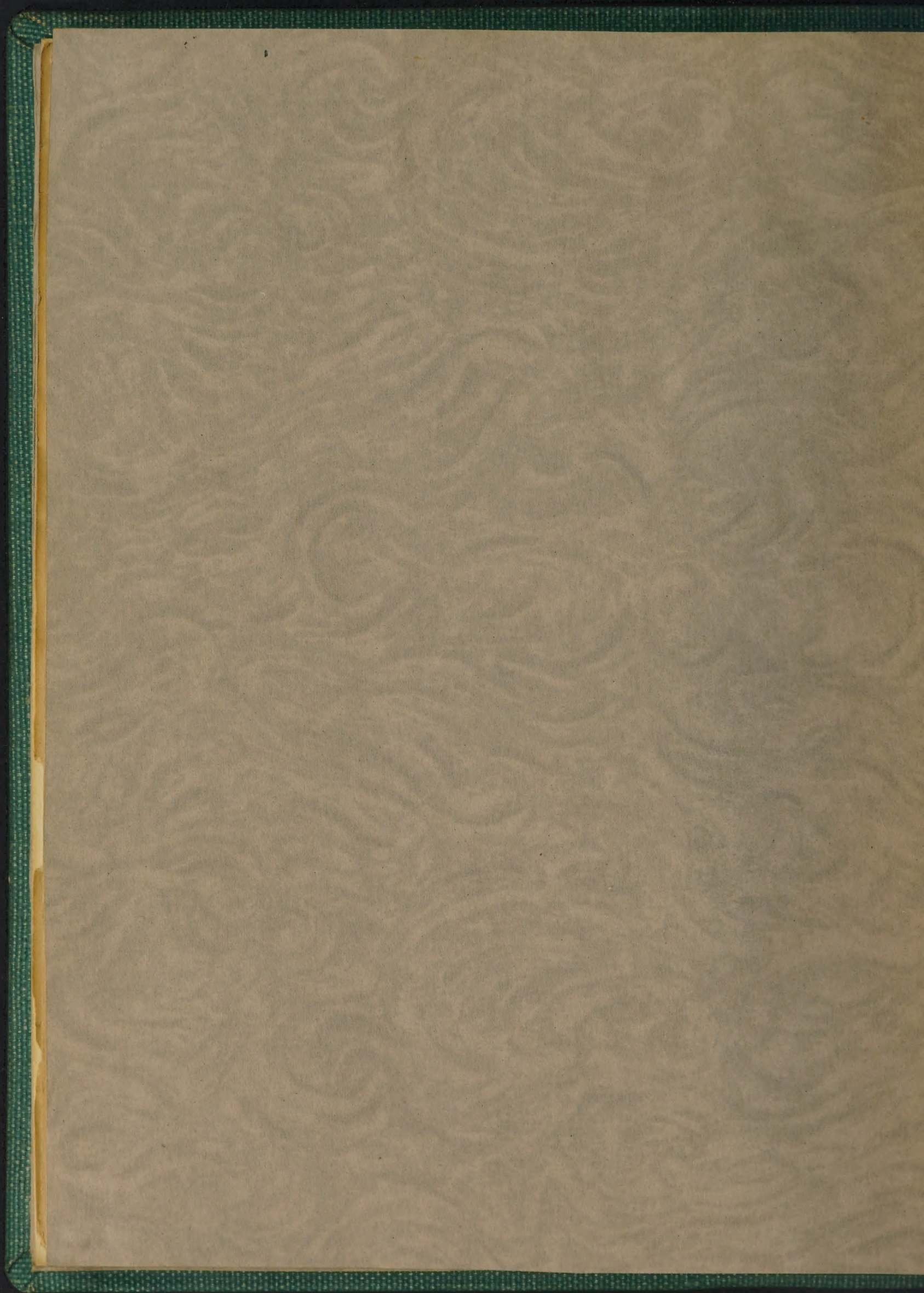


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